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"The Sword of Old St. Joe"



Historical Sketches by
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"THE SWORD OF OLD ST. JOE"

By H. J. L. Wooley, B. D.

CHAPTER I.

THE TRUE STORY OF FORT ST. JOSEPH

Most people of St. Joseph's Island have visited the Old Fort, which is located on a beautiful peninsula at the extreme southern limit of the island, and they have heard, from childhood, various stories concerning its origin and career. Few of these current traditions, however, are founded on fact, and none seem to do justice to this historic spot, which played such an important part in the early history and defence of Canada.

In view of so many conflicting accounts, I have undertaken to collect the real facts and to give, to the inhabitants of St. Joe, an authentic story of just what transpired at this historic old landmark during the closing years of the 18th century and the opening years of the 19th. Therefore, I base this sketch on documents I have received from the Dominion archives at Ottawa.

We have no records at hand to tell just when the white man first raised the standard of possession on St. Joseph's Island, but it undoubtedly was early in the 17th century by French traders who pushed their way up the St. Mary's river as early as 1630, in search of the rich fur treasure from the Lake Superior region. Had we been here during those early days we would have seen many a fur laden brig and batteau moving slowly down these channels on the long voyage to Quebec. These voyageurs undoubtedly had more than one way station on St. Joe's Island, but the one we are certain of was located near the ruins of the old fort. These trading posts came into the possession of the British after their conquest of Canada. In 1783 the North West Fur Company took over and rebuilt this old French post on St. Joe's Island. This was the company which was a bitter rival of the Hudson Bay Co., and after years of strife and even bloodshed, was merged into the latter company in 1820, and from that date till it was abandoned, the post on St. Joe's was known as the Hudson Bay Post.

A number of the great northern trading posts changed ownership after the American revolutionary war, the Union Jack gave place to the stars and stripes on Fort Mackinaw and all the territory now known as Michigan, but the exact boundary line was a matter of dispute between the two nations until 1796 when an attempt at final settlement was made by what is known, in history, as the Jay treaty or commission. The American mentioned St. Joseph's Island among their claims and the commander at Fort Mackinaw was instructed to take formal possession, but before this could be carried into effect, a commission under Captain Brice, of the

Royal Engineers, arrived by way of the Ottawa river, with instructions to survey and examine the country from the straits of Mackinaw to Lake Superior, and report to Lord Dorchester, military governor of Canada, as to what seemed the natural boundary line and also to advise as to the most eligible site for a frontier fort.

Captain Brice and his party evidently went over the disputed region thoroughly and must have spent some time exploring St. Joe, for in his report he states as follows:—"St. Joseph's Island is a very fine island about 27 miles long, one of a numerous group which lies in the straits separating Lake Huron from Lake Superior. It is naturally fertile and well adapted for cultivation but not so well fitted for military purposes. However, I have claimed it for the British crown and have built a stockade".

The stockade mentioned became Fort St. Joseph, and served for a number of years as a sort of coast guard for the North West Company. It was garrisoned by a small detachment of the Royal Canadian veteran regiment, the first all-Canadian regiment ever raised in Canada.

In 1802, General Isaac Brock, one of England's most brilliant soldiers and statesmen, was sent to Canada. He soon saw that the sympathies of the American nation were with the French in their war with England and that a crisis was approaching. Again and again, he urged upon Sir George Prevost, Commander of the British forces in North America, the necessity of strengthening the frontier defences. Sir George, however, was all too hopeful of arriving at an understanding with the American government and did not take these warnings seriously. In December, 1811, General Brock, who was now governor of the Upper Province, submitted a plan of defence to his superior officer. He deplored the defenceless condition of the frontier and urged that British forces should be concentrated at strategic centres so that the American strongholds at Detroit and Mackinaw could be reduced as soon as hostilities would commence. The capture of these fortresses was, in Brock's opinion, the only hope of preventing the Americans from over-running Canada from the west. He especially urged that Fort St. Joseph should be strengthened in view of an attack on Mackinaw in event of war. Sir George Prevost was still hopeful of a peaceful settlement and at any rate was not enthusiastic about Brock's plan, as he deemed the available forces of the British insufficient to hold so long a frontier, but favored rather withdrawing to the Niagara frontier and if necessary abandon the whole country as far east as Kingston. So we see what we owe to the foresight, sagacity and heroism of General Brock. If our destinies had been entrusted to a leader less resourceful and courageous at that critical juncture, the Union Jack, in all probability, would wave over a much smaller portion of the North American continent than it does today, and St. Joe's Island would not be a proud little corner of the great British Empire.

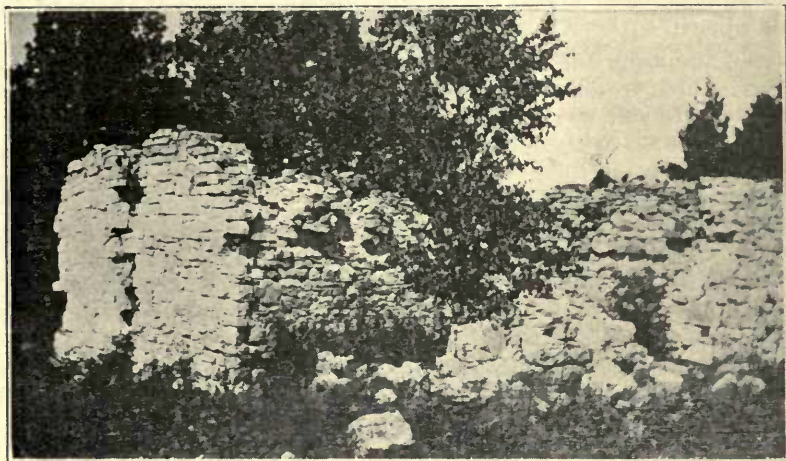
Early in the spring of 1812, General Brock sent a small detachment of Glengarry Fencibles (Canadian Highlanders) to reinforce Captain Rob-

erts at Fort St. Joseph. The hardy Glengarry men marched across to Georgian Bay, came across the Manitoulin and landed at the Fort just as spring opened up.

From examining the old ruins and from a copy of the original plan of the fort, which we have seen, Captain Roberts must have had, under his command, efficient workmen and adequate material for a number of substantial buildings were erected, which still show marks of good masonry and workmanship. In the original drawing is seen magazine, storehouse, guardhouse, barracks, blockhouse, and four gun bastions, all surrounded by a stockade. Outside this were thirteen houses, the foundations of which may still be traced. There is also the remains of a good stone road running up from the shore to the fort. The site of the fort garden and cemetery may also be found. In that rude and forgotten cemetery some of Canada's truest and sturdiest sons found a last resting place. The wives of some of the officers were there and children played and gathered flowers around those shores in those stirring days. Old saw-pits still remain in the reserve back of the fort, where lumber was manufactured by the slow and back-breaking pitsaw, for the construction of buildings, boats, docks, etc. From relics found, the garrison were well supplied with the utensils of modern civilization.

The Americans declared war against Great Britain on June 18th, 1812, and at once crossed into Canada at Detroit. General Brock, ever prompt and alert in all his actions, dispatched orders at once to Capt. Roberts to summon to his aid the men from the fur company, encourage any assistance from the Indians, and attack Fort Mackinaw as soon as possible. Communication was slow in those days and it was the 28th of June before the little garrison knew that it was their duty to proceed against one of the most impregnable fortresses on the frontier. For the next ten days all was feverish activity on the southern shores of the island. The men of the fur trade were summoned from the scattered posts of the north and 160 straggled in, a hardy, fearless lot of men, but not much used to military discipline. The Indians were invited to join and over 300 assembled.

On the morning of July 16th, Captain Roberts gave the order to move and 40 regulars, 160 voyageurs and gentlemen of the fur company and 300 Indians pushed away from old St. Joe on the hazardous venture. They embarked in the sailing brig “Caledonia”, belonging to the Northwest Company and a fleet of small boats and canoes. The French-Canadian voyageurs were sturdy oarsmen and by midnight the lights of Mackinaw were visible. Captain Roberts managed the expedition with the utmost caution, being anxious for a surprise, his army being poorly equipped and poorly trained for an open assault on so strong a fortress. Well he knew if their approach were known and if the American garrison were prepared, the whole expedition might be blown to pieces on the rocky shores of Mackinaw Island. But this time fortune favored the brave, and during the early hours of the morning of July 17th, this strange force, unseen and unheard, scrambled up the precipitous cliffs and



Ruins of the magazine where explosives were stored at Fort St. Joseph

formed in battle array, making as imposing an appearance as possible. The two unwieldy old cannon were trained menacingly on the fort and when all was ready Captain Roberts bade the Indians give the warwhoop. Thus the first knowledge the American garrison had of the impending attack was gained through the blood-curdling yells of the Indian warriors.

Captain Roberts was an honorable and humane officer and had dispatched an officer to warn the civilians of the village, especially the women and children, to repair with all haste to the western point of the island where they would be protected by a British guard from the fury of the Indians, for the warriors would be beyond control once a shot was fired from the fort and would not likely leave a person alive.

The American commander, Lieutenant Hanks, immediately ordered every gun charged and speedy preparations were made for resisting the assault, but by 10 o'clock it was plain that he considered defence was useless, for a white flag was seen moving toward the British position, and the Stars and Stripes began to descend slowly from the ramparts. Roberts had achieved a great success, the only American stronghold guarding the North country came into British hands without a shot being fired, together with large quantities of fur and military stores. The following is a copy of Captain Roberts' own report of the expedition, to General Brock, written by him on the very day that Mackinaw surrendered:

Fort of Michillimackinac,
17 July, 1812.

Isaac Brock,
Major General.

Sir:—

I had the honor to receive your letter dated the 4th of July, on the 15th instant, and foreseeing that I should soon be abandoned by the Indian allies, whose minds had been prepared for hostilities, if I did not immediately employ them, and also that the moment so favorable for making an attack upon this place, so highly important at the present crisis, might soon be lost, I embarked on the morning of the 16th with two of the six pounders and every man I could muster, and at 10 o'clock, the signal being made, we were immediately under way.

By the almost unparalleled exertions of the Canadians who manned the boats, we arrived at the place of rendezvous at 3 o'clock the following morning. One of those unwieldy guns was brought up with much difficulty to the heights above the fort and in readiness to open about 10 o'clock, at which time a summons to surrender was sent in and the capitulation, a copy of which I have the honor to enclose, was soon after agreed upon. I took immediate possession of the fort and displayed the British colors. It is a circumstance, I believe, without precedent, and demands the greatest praise for all those who conducted the Indians, for although these people's minds were much heated, yet as soon as they heard that capitulation was signed, they all returned to their canoes and not one drop of either man or animal's blood was spilt, till I gave an order for a certain number of bullocks to be purchased for them.

I cannot conclude this letter without expressing my warmest thanks to my own officers, to the gentlemen of St. Joseph's and St. Mary's and to every individual engaged in the service.

I trust, sir, in thus acting, I have not exceeded your instructions, for be assured that prudential measures of the first necessity demanded the step which has put us in possession of this island.

I have the honor to be your most obedient humble servant,

CHARLES ROBERTS,
Captain Commanding.

The following is a copy of the capitulation agreement:

Heights above Fort Michillimackinac,
17 July, 1812

Capitulation agreed upon between Captain Charles Roberts, commanding His Britannic Majesty's forces on the one part and Lieutenant Porter Hanks, commanding the forces of the United States of America, on the other:

ARTICLES

1st.—The Fort of Michilimaackinac shall immediately be surrendered to the British force;

2nd.—The garrison shall march out with the honors of war, lay down their arms and become prisoners of war and shall be sent to the United States of America by His Britannic Majesty's forces, not to serve this present war until regularly exchanged. And for due performance of this article the officers pledge their word of honor.

3rd.—All merchant ships in the harbor, with their cargoes, shall be in possession of their respective owners.

4th.—Private property shall be held sacred as far as in my power.

5th.—All citizens of the United States who shall not take the oath of allegiance to His Britannic Majesty shall depart with their property from the island in one month from the date hereof.

Signed:

CHARLES ROBERTS,

Captain Commanding

His Britannic Majesty's Forces.

Signed:

PORTER HANKS,

Commanding the Forces of the United States
of America at Fort Michilimaackinac.

This bold stroke from St. Joe was afterwards regarded as one of the most important moves of the whole war and perhaps more than any other single victory helped to save Canada for the British empire. The news of Roberts' success put heart into Brock's troops and made the future execution of his plans much easier. It also had a disastrous effect upon the morale and plans of the Americans, and General Hull, who had invaded Canada by way of Detroit, fearing that a British force might come down from Mackinaw and attack him in the rear, retreated hastily to his base where he surrendered his whole army to Brock on August 16, 1812.

This, in brief outline, is the history of the old fort. But what became of it at last? That is a part of its history which for many years has remained obscure. Was it burned, as the current accounts declare? No, the official records say it was not. The only American force in the north country surrendered at Mackinaw, hence there was no enemy to surprise and consign it to the flames as has been alleged, and then fort buildings were mostly of stone and roofed with sheet iron, so it was well nigh in-
flammable. The story of its burning may have gained credence from the fact that another Fort St. Joseph, on River St. Clair, belonging to the French, was burned by the Indians in 1701, or it may have grown out of the story of the destruction of the fur company's post on St. Joseph's Island many years before the old fort was founded. At any rate the old fort did not go up in smoke at all, but remained a British port of call until the close of the war, and then it was completely evacuated and was dismantled and much of it removed, by the Royal Veteran Battalion, to the larger base on Drummond Island.

It will be noted that our revered old fort played no mean part in those critical days of the empire's history, and for over a hundred years it has stood alone in its glory, a mute reminder of what we owe to a gallant ancestry. It has been the regret of the citizens of St. Joseph's Island that during all these years no effort has been made to preserve the crumbling walls and chimneys or to make this beautiful spot easily accessible to the history loving public. We are glad to know that some move has at last been made in that direction.

CHAPTER II.

GOODS AND PRICES AT ST. JOSEPH IN 1799

The British flag was first hoisted on the site of Fort St. Joseph in 1796, when the British post at Mackinaw was transferred to the jurisdiction of the United States by mutual agreement. The fact of this transfer is found in the following extract of a report from Thomas Duggan, clerk and Indian agent, at the post of Mackinaw, to Joseph Chew, secretary for Indian affairs at Montreal. It is dated at Mackinaw, June 14, 1796, and reads as follows:

"Lieutenant Foster has gone to the island of St. Joseph with a sergeant, a corporal and twelve men. They are building huts there for their present convenience. Captain Brice, of the Royal Engineers, is exploring the country and surveying a site for the post, but I am fearful that if we evacuate this post this year, according to orders, it will be late in the fall. I am afraid our winter quarters there will not be very agreeable. The amount of stores for removal will amount to about £1,400 (pounds) sterling, exclusive of rum and tobacco for the Indians."

So this was the beginning of the historic fortress that was to guard the St. Mary's River during the critical years that were to follow. Two years later extensive building operations took place at St. Joseph and the stone buildings were constructed which may still be seen, the following is an extract from a report of the same Thomas Duggan to Montreal, under date of Sept. 28, 1798:

"Considerable building operations have taken place here this summer and such were sorely necessary as we have suffered much hardship and inconvenience. I am giving you a list of the persons building this year near the blockhouse. A large storehouse by the North West Company, dwelling houses by Captain Lamothe, M. Duggan, M. Langlade, M. Birkett, Mr. Chauvin, Mr. Ogilvie, M. Gillespie, Mr. Pathitr, Mr. Chiset and Mr. Frerot."

The next year, 1799, the storage space being materially enlarged by additional buildings, a consignment of goods for trade at the post arrived by schooner, the following is an exact copy of the invoice, the nature and quality of the goods is interesting to us today, also the prices:

- Awls, Indian, five hundred, per gross, 2s. 6d.
 Axes, forty-eight, 4s.
 Ball and shot, two thousand five hundred pounds, per cwt., 22s. 6d.
 Blankets, 1 point, one hundred pairs, 5s. 3d.
 Blankets, 1½ point, one hundred pairs, 6s. 3d.
 Blankets, 2 point, one hundred pairs, 7s. 8d.
 Blankets, 2½ point, two hundred and fifty pairs, 10s. 6d.
 Blankets, 3 point, one hundred and fifty pairs, 13s.
 Brooches, three thousand, per gross, 50s.
 Buckles, shoe, seventy two pairs, per pair, 10s.
 Buttons twenty dozen, per dozen, 4s. 3d.
 Calico, nine hundred yards, 2s. 3d.
 Cadis, three hundred and sixty yards, 2s. 6d.
 Cloth, blue, seventy two yards, 10s.
 Cloth, scarlet, seventy two yards, 11s.
 Cloth, green, seventy two yards, 10s.
 Cloth, black, seventy two yards, 10s.
 Combs, ivory, per dozen, 7s. 6d.
 Box for combs, 2 dozen, 3s.
 Combs, horn, 24 dozen, per dozen, 2s. 4d.
 Coats for chiefs, twenty-four, 45s.
 Cotton strip't, three hundred and thirty yards, 2s. 3d.
 Ear bobs, five hundred pairs, 13d.
 Gun flints, two thousand, per dozen, 13s.
 Feathers, forty eight boxes, per box, 1s.
 Files, sixty dozen, per dozen, 17s. 6d.
 Ferretting silk, seven hundred yards, per yard, 4s. 2d.
 Flannel, two hundred yards, per yard 1s. 3d.
 Flags, twenty four, 15d.
 Gartering, eight hundre dyards, per gross, 15s.
 Guns, common, fifty, each £1.
 Guns, chiefs, twenty four, £4.
 Rifles, eighteen, £4 5s.
 Gun powder, eight hundred pounds, per hundred pounds, £4 2s.
 Hats, plain, seventy two, 4s.
 Hats, laced, thirty six, 8s.
 Hooks, fishing, one thousand, per dozen, 1s. 6d.
 Handkerchiefs, silk, forty eight, each 3s. 6d.
 Handkerchiefs, cotton, 2s.
 Hoes, fifty, 2s.
 Kettles, brass, one hundred and seventy six, each 19d.
 Kettles, copper, one hundred and twenty two, 2s. 1d.
 Kettles. tin, seventy two, 3s.
 Butcher knives, eight hundred and sixty, 1s.
 Linen, Irish, seven hundred and fifty yards, per yard 3s.
 Chalk lines, twelve dozen, per dozen, 2s.
 Mackerel lines, one hundred and fifty, 6s.

Cod lines, seventy two, each, 2s. 6d.
 Looking glasses, seventy two dozen, per dozen, 4s.
 Melton cloth, four hundred yards, per yard, 1s. 6d.
 Muslin, forty yards, per yard, 3s.
 Medals, large, twelve, 2s. 6d.
 Needles, one thousand, per dozen, 4s. 6d.
 Oiled cloths, six, each, 40s.
 Pipes, two thousand, per gross, 1s. 3d.
 Ribbon, seven hundred yards, per yard 7½d.
 Cloth, serge, embossed, three hundred yards, 18½d.
 Strouds, (coarse blankets), four hundred, each, 3s. 6d.
 Strouds, blue, one hundred, 2s. 6d.
 Sheeting, Russian, three hundred yards, per yard, 1s. 10d.
 Sheeting, Scotch, one hundred and forty four, per yard, 11½d.
 Fire steels one hundred and forty, per gross, 15s.
 Scissors, one hundred pairs, per pair, 6½d.
 Shoes, men's, seventy two pairs, per pair, 4s. 4½d.
 Steel, sixty pounds, per pound, 6d.
 Tobacco, twelve hundred pounds, per pound, 9d.
 Thread, sewing, fifteen pounds, per pound, 2s. 6d.
 Trunks, twelve, each, 3s. 6d.
 Vermillion, fifty pounds, per pound, 4s.
 Gun worms, two hundred and eighty-eight, per gross, 8s.
 Grind stones, two, each, 25s.
 Amounting to one thousand, six hundred and ninety four pounds,
 one shilling and five pence, sterling.

Signed,

CHAS. LANGLADE, Merchant
 WM. FRASER, Lieutenant
 WM. DEAN, Ensign

Island of St. Joseph, August 8th, 1799.

This invoice was returned to Major Green, headquarters, Quebec, with the following report :

Island of St. Joseph, Aug. 8, 1799.

Sir :

I have the honor to enclose, herewith, a report of a board of survey on the goods when they arrived, also of what remained in store since last year, also a report of the ordnance stores for this post by which you will observe there are some repairs necessary. I beg leave to inform you, there were five deserters arrived from Mackinaw a few days since, followed by different parties of Americans expecting to take them up at this post, with assurance of delivering any of ours who might go over to them, but as I had never heard of any regulation taken place between the British and American governments respecting deserters since the treaty of peace, I did not think myself justified in delivering them up, without having His Excellency, the

commander-in-chief's directions on the subject. I also enclose abstract and receipts for Mr. Fraser's allowance as overseer over the works carried on here in the absence of the engineer.

I have the honor to be,

Sir, your most obedient, humble servant,

PETER DRUMMOND, Capt.,
2nd Batt., R. C. Volunteers, commanding.

CHAPTER III.

THE TRIAL OF THOMAS DUGGAN IN 1802

We were working diligently, in the glimmering twilight of a glorious August evening, uncovering the ruins of a stout, stone fireplace now overgrown with bushes and vines, when my shovel brought up a substance neither earth nor stone. I examined it eagerly, for one's curiosity, when digging around old ruins, is childish and almost uncanny.

'It's a bone, human bone, too, an elbow joint,' I informed my companion.

"Perhaps it's Duggan," was his comment. "Yes, sir, here's one of his ribs," and he held up a small rib bone. Then we both laughed at our improbable theories, and agreed that the bones were more likely the remains of the proverbial pork barrel of those far-off days when Fort St. Joseph was in its prime. Then we threw up the neck of a large bottle and agreed this was more plausible evidence that we had found the site of Duggan's house.

I straightened myself up and surveyed my surroundings, in the gathering darkness, and reminded my friend that the neighboring beach and bay looked like a likely landing place for Indians coming down the river and this spot a convenient place for the agent's house and office. Yes! We might have traced Duggan to his lair and might find something under these stones and debris that would give us positive evidence.

But who was Duggan? What part did he play in the drama of the old fort? What did we know about this man with the Celtic name of Thomas Duggan. The fact is we know just enough to make us wish we knew more.

"I wish these stones would speak and tell us what we want to know about him," I said.

"Yes; I would like to know how he came out," was my companion's wish. "I guess he got his desserts, though."

We were referring to documents in our possession, which described a court of inquiry, held at the old fort in the year 1802, in which Thomas Duggan, keeper of the King's store, was defendant.

When we got back to our tent under the birches at the foot of the old military road, we brought out the documents and, in the light of the camp-fire on the sands, had a long discussion about those stirring times when



The ruins of the fireplace, thought to be the site of Duggan's house

Duggan was in the limelight, and then while the healthy snores of my three bed-fellows measured off the long hours of the midnight, I lay awake reconstructing, by my over-wrought imagination, that court scene of January 25, 1802, when Duggan was called before the bar of British justice. The play of the moonbeams on the ghostly walls of the old magazine up the ridge was all that was needed to make one hundred years ago seem as yesterday to me. I could almost hear that January wind roar in seeming defiance as it drove the snow in skimmering swirls down the ridge and far out over the white wastes of Lake Huron. I could see the winter forest of St. Joe's Island, the low log dwellings that resembled so many farm root houses except for the stout chimneys which sent great columns of smoke from the breakfast fires. The documents hint at an unusual stir among the inhabitants that morning. The civilians had just heard enough to make them curious, and how to get the whole story was their dilemma. They could expect no news from the military, for the one up-to-date feature at the post was its military regulations and censorship.

Lieutenant Cowell, the commanding officer, was a strict disciplinarian and brought to the little far-away post an air of authority and a ponderous gravity that seemed almost ridiculous.

All the civilians knew was that a squabble between Mr. Duggan and some Chippewas was to be aired in a military court that morning. Be-whiskered men in ill-fitting overcoats straggled up through the drifts to the fort gate and when refused admittance by the guard, fell back on the blacksmith shop to spend the forenoon in argument and conjecture.

Promptly at ten o'clock the court was called in the blockhouse, (the ruins of which still stand). The members of this tribunal arrest our attention for they were strong picturesque characters and some of them played no mean part in that formative period of Canada's history. We are thankful our documents give a good description of them. The president of the council was Lieutenant Robert Cowell, of the Queen's Rangers, an officer of the line, who served with distinction, in later years, under Wellington. He is described as a forceful personality, an officer who took his responsibilities very seriously and believed that to the British soldier fell the responsibility of policing the world to its remotest bounds. Another distinguished member of the court was Lieutenant P. Taschereau of the Royal Canadian Volunteers, a sprightly, sputtering son of Lower Canada, who rendered valuable service to the defense of his country later. Then there was Dr. Robert Richardson, of the Queen's Rangers, a prominent figure in the military life of those days. He was the father of Major John Richardson, author of *Wacousta*, our first Canadian-born author. Then there was John Martyn, the trusted and cool-headed Indian interpreter, and Dr. William Lee, the hospital mate, Ensign Alex. McNabb, Q. R., Corporal Joseph Bryett, Q. R., and Charles Chaboilley, of the Indian department.

Thomas Duggan took his seat in the dock with an aid of jovial unconcern. It would require more than a court of inquiry to shake the nerve of this old war horse. He had been at St. Joseph since it was founded in 1796 and had seen rough times and was thoroughly seasoned. He was a popular figure and was regarded by the inhabitants as the father of the post. He was a regular walking encyclopedia, talking and story-telling was his long suit, which he seasoned with an assortment of Irish songs and crude jokes. He was the wit of the settlement and his name was known for hundreds of miles along the trails. In character he was a strange mixture of virtue and vice, of strength and weakness. He feared not the face of man, whatever his color or rank, yet he bore evidence that man's ancient enemy, King Alcohol, was holding the whip-hand over him. While he had the jovial mien and warm heart peculiar to his Celtic race, he was dictatorial and arbitrary and considered that his long service and position gave him the right of a sort of overlord. The inhabitants seemed to have granted him this right and he ruled as the unofficial mayor of the whole settlement.

Notwithstanding his privileged position, he could hope for nothing but justice at the hands of this military court, even if his accusers were the despised Chippewas. Most members of the court had spent years in close contact with the red man, and had little love for him, for he rarely inspired love, more commonly contempt. No doubt every member of this court would have heartily concurred in General Hunter's characterization of the Indian. In his report to the Duke of Kent in the year 1860 this is what he said:

"It must not be forgotten that gratitude is not among the Indian's virtues, if he has any at all. Fear restrains him and the desire of

plunder allures him; if he has any other fixed principle of action it has escaped the writer's notice. He's of a restless disposition, unfixed in his friendships and immovable in his enmity. He's a terrible and dangerous enemy, always prowling like a wolf in search of prey and must be employed,—if not for us he will be against us.”

Every member of the court would have said “amen” to those sentiments, the Indian was a savage and a “lesser breed without the law” but the old flag flapping wildly from the flagstaff in that January wind was a guarantee to every man beneath its folds, of equal justice, irrespective of his rank or race. This tradition, that has come down, with ever broadening effect, from the old Magna Charta, was not to be ignored even in this remote corner of the empire. Truly no country in history has been able to surpass the traditional fairness and impartiality of British justice. If there is a spot in the world where a rich and influential man is of no more account than an obscure and friendless man, it is the dock of an English court. The complainant might be a lawless, friendless man of the forest and the place St. Joseph's Island, on the very fringe of civilization, where it might have been easy to let things slip by and shield the white man, but we find the mills of British justice grinding there with the same old precision and fairness.

In opening the court, Lieutenant Cowell made a brief statement, which was interpreted to the Indians present by Mr. Martyn, in which he reviewed Great Britain's attitude towards the Indians. He explained that His Majesty's government recognized the Indians' rights of possession to this new world and was willing to reimburse them in the form of presents or rations of food and clothing from the king's store. Every Indian resorting to the post of St. Joseph had a right to an allowance on the terms specified by His Majesty's government. If any Indian felt that he was unfairly dealt with, he had the privilege of making his complaint to the commanding officer and it would be summarily dealt with by a court of inquiry. They were called this day to deal with two complaints preferred against Thomas Duggan, agent of the King's store.

The first complainant to be called was a young Chippewa Indian, who came forward boldly and in a quiet manner stated his complaint to the court through the interpreter, Mr. Martyn. He stated that on January 2nd, he had obtained a requisition from Mr. Duggan for one bag of corn, two pieces of pork and one bottle of rum. These articles he got at the King's store and brought them to the house of Mr. Duggan, who took from him the bag of corn, the bottle of rum and half the pork, leaving him out of the whole requisition only two pounds of pork. On being questioned by the court, the Indian declared further, that he had taken only one drink from the bottle and that Mr. Duggan kept the rest. On being asked further how much of a bottle of rum he could take at one drink, he could not say. He further affirmed that he had been to Mr. Duggan's house several times for the provisions, but was refused them.

Mr. Duggan was then called and asked what he had to say on the matter. Assuming the same air of unconcern, he attempted to treat the whole

matter with contempt and sought to turn it into a joke, but was sharply rebuked by the court. In firm tones, Lieut. Cowell asked Mr. Duggan if the charge against him was true or untrue. To this he replied, with some heat, that he knew nothing of the matter whatever, that he did not remember the complainant ever coming to his house and that he never on any occasion took corn or rum from any one at this post. He then requested the court to permit him to go and fetch his servant boy who could substantiate his evidence. The court politely informed him that the boy would be called by the guard. The boy, being called, was asked if the complainant was at Mr. Duggan's house on January 2. The witness was much excited and could not be induced to answer until the kindly Dr. Richardson took him in charge and then he told that he saw the Indian in question receive his provisions from the King's store and bring them to Mr. Duggan's house, that the Indian was drunk on the rum and left the corn and pork, and that these provisions still remained in Mr. Duggan's house.

The other complaint was then dealt with. It was preferred by a Chipewa squaw and was to the effect that Mr. Duggan had detained a bag of corn and a bottle of rum from her, being part of her requisition from the King's store, on the 14th instant.

Mr. Duggan in answer to this charge said that seeing this woman was very drunk he thought it proper to detain the corn and remaining rum as she was likely to exchange the corn for more rum, which would only result in injury to herself and the poor little papooses this unworthy woman had left in the Indian village. Mr. Duggan made this reference with signs of deep feeling. He added that the provisions were still at the foot of his bed and she might have them at any time.

Mr. Martyn was called and gave evidence that he saw the Indian woman on the afternoon of the 14th and that she appeared perfectly sober, that he saw her again in the evening and she appeared to be in no wise disguised with liquor.

Mr. Chaboilley also gave evidence to the effect that he saw the woman that afternoon and she was not drunk.

Dr. Lee also stated that he saw the woman that evening and that she was sober.

Mr. Duggan was again called and asked for a further statement. He said that he could not remember now, whether the woman was drunk on that day or some other day. At any rate he had detained the corn fearing that she might get drunk and make an improper use of it. He again affirmed, with feeling, that he was thinking of the little ones this woman had left behind in the Indian village and was anxious to get this woman away sober, but found it difficult to do so.

The woman was then asked about her children and she declared that her children were all big warriors and gone away off.

This concluded the evidence. After some time in consultation Lieutenant Cowell announced that the report of the whole proceedings would be despatched as quickly as possible to his excellency, the commander-in-chief, at Quebec, and the court would await his judgment before making final disposition of the case.

In the meantime Thomas Duggan was suspended from his position as agent for the Indian stores and Mr. Martyn would act in his stead.

What the final judgment was, we have no records at hand to tell. What became of Thomas Duggan we do not know. We know little of his subsequent career. All we know is that he was never reinstated as government agent.

CHAPTER IV.

JOSEPH CRADDOCK, A CHILD OF OLD ST. JOE

I stood one day surveying, for the first time, the ruins of old Fort St. Joseph, on that beautiful peninsula, which guards, like a crouching lion, the entrance to the St. Mary's River.

There was the old road, the crumbling walls, the gun emplacements, and most impressive of all, some gentle garden flowers, which have wasted their fragrance on the desert air of over a hundred years; a gentle but sure reminder of the place where once dwelt civilized human beings. These mute symbols of the past drew me into a reverie of retrospection and I saw in fancy the old fort of 1812; I saw men in the scarlet and blue of the British army, men in blankets and leather stockings, men rough and unkempt, called voyageurs, and I saw women and children. I heard the blast of the bugle, the tramp of men and the jumbled sounds of a human community.

But then, what's the use of day dreaming? Fancy may be far from fact. I left the old fort that night, resolved that I would search here and there till I knew the facts about some of the individuals who lived there during the stirring days of 1812. Thank fortune, I have not searched in vain, and I am now able to tell the story of some of the sturdy souls who lived and wrought there.

There is one whose life story claims singular attention to the citizens of St. Joe, because he was born at the old fort. He was the child of Lieut. John Craddock, of the 41st regiment, who served for a number of years on the frontier defences of Canada. The lonely, rough life of the backwoods had its effects on John's spirits and aspirations and he was getting "jolly well bored and beastly 'omesick" when he chanced to meet and finally married a winsome halfbreed daughter of Lower Canada. There was a flutter of excitement at Fort St. Joseph when this soldier with his wife and little Katrine arrived one day in the fall of 1811. The soldiers had their gossip on the side about this "andsome hofficer and 'is bloom-

in' 'awf and 'awf'" (half breed) but they agreed "she looked like a good 'un, and there was nought better to be 'ad or 'oped for in this bloomin' wilderness."

One morning in the spring of 1812 the doughty officer was offered the conventional congratulations on the arrival of a wee, dark-skinned baby boy. In answer to the query, "what yer goin' to call 'im?" he answered, "I expect we'll call 'im Joseph, in honor of this bloomin' fort," and so he was christened Joseph Craddock, the fort baby, the pet and mascot of the garrison.

For a few weeks John Craddock experienced the joys and comforts of a happy little home, even if it were improvised and in the edge of the Great Wilderness and then the cruel God of War tore his family ties asunder, for the War God mocks domestic felicity and shows his teeth at all tender feelings of men. One beautiful morning in July of that fateful year, John bade his little family a soldier's hasty farewell and hurried on board the schooner Caledonia, to take part in the expedition that was to capture the fortress of Mackinaw; for war had been declared.

"You'll likely 'ear from me within a fortnight," were among his last assurances, and "I'll come and get you when we're settled." But the fortunes of war ruled otherwise and John was never again to see his dusky loved ones at old St. Joe. From Mackinaw he was sent as a despatch runner to Montreal and from there was ordered back to England and the last we hear about him he was numbered among the slain at Waterloo. What became of little Joe? Do we know? Yes, we know. For sixteen years he lived with his mother and little Katrine in the shadow of the forts at Mackinaw and Drummond Island, and then in 1828 they moved with the garrison to the new base at Penetanguishene, where Joe grew to manhood. What kind of man was he, this son of the old fort? Was he worthless or worthwhile? Good or good for nothing? Is his name worthy of remembrance or had he better be forgotten? These are the very questions by which history will search all our lives in the great future, "and the fire shall prove every man's work of what sort it is." And the fire is the fire of history, and it has no respect for persons.

Joseph Craddock lived well past the allotted time, dying at Coldwater in 1900, full of years and adorned with a creditable record, for it is written of him that "he was scrupulously honest and upright in all his dealings, highly respected and a pattern to the community in which he lived."

A splendid epitaph; one which might be the pride and envy of us all. Great opportunities and favored circumstances were not his: the fort, the wilderness and the shore was his world; the Indian, the soldier and the 'awf and 'awf his companions, yet he leaves the record: "Scrupulously honest and upright in all his dealings, highly respected and a pattern to the community in which he lived."

CHAPTER V.

THE ORIGIN OF THE MACKINAW COAT

The dictionary informs us that the mackinaw coat is a thick, short, double-breasted coat of a plaid pattern, and that definition is perhaps correct as far as it goes, so far so good; but the dictionary, at least mine, does not tell us how the name mackinaw coat got into our vocabulary; why was it called a mackinaw coat? What has Mackinaw got to do with the coat, anyway?

Perhaps not many who wear this thick, short, double-breasted coat of plaid pattern know that it got its name and found its origin in the historic region of St. Joseph's Island, for these are the facts which official documents bring to light.

In November, 1811, Captain Roberts, commanding at Fort St. Joseph, sent a very pessimistic report to military headquarters at Quebec. The cause of the pessimism was twofold; first, this gallant officer had battled for years against man's most greivous enemy, ill health, and it does seem true that there is a bond of sympathy between pessimism and ill health; like the Siamese twins, they are often one and inseparable. The canker that eats out the zest and optimism from many a life is nothing more than poor digestion or some other physical disorder. When Captain Roberts was suffering from his chronic malady, the loneliness and hardships of the improvised post, bore heavily on his spirits and was reflected in his reports.

But the other and more cogent cause of the pessimistic report was that this splendid officer loved his handful of troops and they were without overcoats with winter setting in. Yes! Think of it, facing a rigorous winter on St. Joe without the semblance of great coats. No wonder Roberts found it difficult to write a cheerful report.

Again and again during that year had he reminded headquarters of this vital requirement of the garrison, but ships had come and gone and no coats were found amongst the cargo. The soldiers had felt the cold but had patched and mended and tried to pack all their troubles in their old kit-bag and smile. But it evidently was no joke to the man who was to command these men through the long, cold winter ahead; he reminded the G. H. Q. that his men had really suffered from the cold and many times he had been under the necessity of removing the guard into the barrack rooms. The last schooner is up from Amherstburg for the season and no coats. What is the use of merely informing G. H. Q. again? It is scarcely possible to transport a consignment of forty coats by snowshoe over the long route from Montreal. Must the little garrison be left to face the storm and frost of another winter with no overcoats? No, it is unthinkable. It shall not be. The men must have coats. Captain Roberts finds a solution and then in compliance with army rules he informs headquarters of his decision. The following is an extract from the report:



Ruins of the great double fireplace of the King's store, where the first blanket coats were made

Island of St. Joseph, 20th November, 1811.

Capt. Evans, Adjutant, Quebec.

All hopes having now ceased of the arrival of the schooner Hunter or any other vessel from Amherstburg with the clothing of the detachment, I am, this day, obtaining, upon my requisition to the store-keeper of the Indian department, a consignment of heavy blankets, for the purpose of making them great coats, a measure the severity of the climate strongly demands and one, I trust, the commander of the forces will not disprove of when he is informed that not a remnant remains of the coats served out to them in the year 1807 and that they have received none since."

We can appreciate the difficulties of supplying a far away post like St. Joe's in those days. It is not to be wondered at that there was delay which often entailed hardship, but it does seem strange that a commanding officer, under such circumstances, had not the authority to obtain supplies through any other channel without first obtaining permission but such were the regulations of the British army one hundred years ago and perhaps, after all, it was a wise and safe precaution and made it less easy to graft and embezzle than it is today.

Technically, Captain Roberts was exceeding his authority when he requisitioned the blankets without first obtaining permission from Quebec, but that might delay matters till midwinter and Roberts was not in a mood to permit his men to freeze simply to comply with red tape. So he secured the blankets and asked for permission afterwards and after more than one hundred years we join with the grateful soldiers in saying, "Good old Roberts! He did the right thing, for it was beastly cold."

The blanket selected was the 3½ point Hudson Bay blanket, which is still such a trusted protector against Jack Frost. The color asked for was blue, but there not being enough of that color the order was finished in red and a few plaid. But the worst was yet to come. Roberts had the goods, but how were they to be converted into forty great coats fit for soldiers of the king? There were no professional seamstresses nor tailors on the island and would the non-professionals undertake to make coats for the British army? But the redoubtable John Askin, keeper of the King's store was never afraid of impossibilities, so he relieved Captain Roberts of further perplexity by saying: "Just leave it to me, sir; just leave it in my hands; I'll get them made somehow, sir."

But how? When? But Askin's only explanation was: "Just leave it to me, sir, and I'll have them ready in a fortnight." Captain Roberts had no idea how it was to be done, for it was a big contract under the circumstances, but he knew that when John Askin said he would do a thing and do it by a certain day he generally did it, so without further question he simply said, "All right, Mr. Askin, I'll leave it to you to have them ready by a fortnight."

Within a few hours the King's store had put on the appearance of a wholesale tailorshop for John Asken had eight or ten white and half breed women to work on the blankets, making the great coats for the King's soldiers.

"Somebody said that it couldn't be done,
But he with a chuckle replied,
That maybe it couldn't, but he would be one
Who would never say no, till he'd tried.
So he buckled right in with a trace of a grin
If he worried, he hid it,
He started to sing as he tackled the thing
That couldn't be done and he did it.

Somebody scoffed, 'Oh, you'll never do that,,
At least no one ever has done it.
But he took off his coat and he took off his hat,
And the first thing he knew he'd begun it,
With the lift of his chin and a bit of a grin;
If any doubt rose he forbid it.
He started to sing as he tackled the thing
That couldn't be done and he did it."

And sure enough, before the fortnight was quite up John Askin informed the commander of Fort St. Joseph that the coats were completed and everybody was greatly pleased when the soldiers paraded in their new coats. All agreed that they were superior to the regulation army coat, they were warmer and of finer appearance, for Askin had them trimmed with brass buttons, shoulder straps and fancy pockets.

So throughout the long severe winter of 1811-12, the soldiers guarding the southern end of St. Joseph's Island were comfortable and quite content, and when the call to war resounded from post to post the following spring these men were fit and ready to strike the first important blow by capturing Mackinaw from the Americans.

No doubt, the warm $3\frac{1}{2}$ point coat was a contributing factor to the high morale of the soldiers of old St. Joe.

The first cold wave of the autumn of 1812 found Captain Roberts, who was now in command of the larger fortress at Mackinaw Island, face to face with the coat problem again. No army coats had come north that year, the transportation and supply system was demoralized by war and none could be expected. Roberts' reinforcements needed coats, traders and workmen needed coats, Indian chiefs asked for coats, the cry from all quarters was for "coats". But the gallant captain was not down-hearted this time, for this was one of his problems which had been solved. One cool morning he paraded his detachment from St. Joe dressed in their comfortable $3\frac{1}{2}$ point coats. The coatless spectators looked on admiringly and when they once more made their wants and wishes known, they were told that the captain had requisitioned a large consignment of blankets from the Indian department, had engaged some professional tailors and seamstresses and was ready for orders.

And so the orders poured in. A despatch runner requested that his coat be made short, as the snow was likely to be deep between Mackinaw and Montreal. So the mackinaw coat was designed, a short, thick, doublebreasted coat of blue design at first, but plaid soon became the most popular pattern. It was found to be just the thing for the northern trails and orders came in from as far north as Fort William and as far east as Penetanguishene, and throughout that vast region it was designated the mackinaw coat.

So it has been with us for over a hundred winters, this short, thick, double-breasted coat of plaid pattern and perhaps few who wear it and

enjoy its comfort and durability know that it had its birth at old St. Joe in November, 1811 — a child of grim necessity.

When can its glory fade?
Stout little coat of plaid,
All the North wondered.
Honor the coat they made
Down at the old stockade,
Still made by the hundred.

CHAPTER VI.

THE WRECK OF THE RUM SHIP HACKET

A word that smells in many decent nostrils today, is the word “rum-ship”, a name now commonly used to designate a strange sort of craft which plies all waters contiguous to the U. S. A. The rum-ship has a bad reputation; it is classed as the outlaw and buccaneer of the seas and is being hunted with increasing vigilance by the ironclads of the American navy. Even the friends of King Rum do not come to the defense of the rum-ship, but wash their hands of the whole subject by declaring that the rum-ship is the child of prohibition. Smash prohibition, and Rum Row will disappear as naturally as the morning dew before the rising sun. Prohibition has put armed ships on the Great Lakes for the first time in a hundred years, they add, which may lead to serious complications. All the lawlessness and crime waves that trouble us today are declared to be the children of this modern nuisance, prohibition. So, the rising generation may be led to believe that King Alcohol never gave us any trouble until we tried to handcuff him. Like the western Indian, he was friendly and peaceable until coerced and then he got to “acting like the devil.”

But we raise a little protest against such propaganda and make bold to say that rum has always been the curse of the seas and if the whole story were known it would be found that many a stout ship has gone to rest forever on the great sea bottom because rum was in the hold. Our first witness in support of this contention is the good ship “Hackett”, that went to her doom on Lake Huron nearly a hundred years ago for the above mentioned cause. It was not by intention that she was made a rum-ship; she was chartered for a more honorable purpose, but the rum inside her decks got inside her crew and a drunken crew is as dangerous with a ship as a drunken chauffeur with an automobile.

It was in November, 1828, that this stout schooner of the lakes, commanded by her owner, Captain John Hacket, was chartered to assist in the removal of the British garrison and stores from Drummond Island to Penetanguishene; for a final boundary survey had been made and Drum-

mond Island was declared to be in United States territory. The military authorities had sent the brig Wellington to do the moving, but she could not hold everything, so William Solomon, government interpreter and Indian agent at Fort Drummond, was instructed to charter another ship. On the Hacket was placed the military stores and equipment which the Wellington could not carry. There were two span of horses, four cows, twelve sheep, eight hogs, harness, household furniture, etc.

Her passenger list included a small detachment of soldiers, a number of French-Canadian voyageurs and half-breeds, besides the crew. They were rough, but brave men, made hardy and enduring by the rigors of the wilderness. They were men of loyal and true hearts and though they anticipated happier times at the new post on the mainland, they had viewed with a tinge of bitterness, the hauling down of the British flag from the ramparts and the handing of the keys to the American officer by their trusted commander, Lieut. Carson. They obeyed when bidden to shake hands with their old enemies, but at the same time thought hard toward the members of the Boundary Commission, who had so generously agreed that Drummond Island should be transferred to another flag. However, it was not theirs to reason why, so they went about the work of moving with the calm consciousness that they had stood loyally by the old flag when the call came and now they would turn away from the old camping ground to enjoy all that the change might bring to them.

That fourth of November morning was chill and gray, when the Hacket weighed anchor and shot out, with a bound, into the white-capped bosom of Lake Huron. The good ship had weathered many a rough gale on the lakes and would doubtless have delivered her cargo and crew safely at the post on Georgian Bay had it not been that Jim Fraser, the fort tavern-keeper, had been taken on board that morning with thirteen barrels of whiskey besides other odd bits of liquid dynamite. Jim was a wily merchant, used to trading with all manner of men, and knew the power of a few free drinks to enhance big business in his line, hence no sooner had Drummond Island faded into blue haze and windy cloud sheets on the western horizon, than Jim tapped a barrel and called all hands to drink a last toast to "Awld Drummond". This had the effect that Jim expected it would, it was like the proverbial taste of blood to this motley crowd; they came for more and again they came, with their shillings and pence, nodding assent to Jim's opinion that a man surely needed something hot on such a raw day.

By night the lake was lashed into boisterous waves by the increasing wind, while a driving rain added to the general discomfiture. The storm without and the alcohol within put the good old ship Hacket at a decided disadvantage. Had Jim Fraser not been on board she might have steered a straight course and stood up trim and true to the gale but as it was she zig-zagged over the waves as if she were trying to foil a submarine. About midnight danger loomed up right ahead, but the lookout was out of business and no one saw nor eared, until a great crash and a thunderous jolt sent the unsteady crew sprawling in all directions.

“Yo ho! In port at last,” a thick voice called out, and then someone started a stifled cheer, but the fact was that they were far from port and had met with a fatal disaster. The ship had foundered. Yes, “the good ship Hacket lay hard and fast, caught without hope on a hidden rock. Her timbers thrilled, as nerves, when through her passed the spirit of that shock.”

The crew and passengers, though in an advanced state of intoxication, sobered considerably in the presence of their peril, and soon had the lifeboats launched. They knew that land of some kind was near and that their only chance lay in reaching it through the boiling waves. Somehow, they landed safely, for it does sometimes seem true that you cannot kill a drunken man. About the only part of the cargo they saved was the remainder of the thirteen barrels of whiskey. This they carefully carried up the beach and when it was made safe for the night they huddled together and were soon oblivious to the world’s mad strife. There they lay till morning broke and then, roused, one by one and began to look around, for they could recall but little, but a piercing cry from Pierre Lepine brought them all to their feet.

“Me wife and chil’,” shouted the excited French-Canadian. “Where are dey? Dey on ship yesterday, now dey not here,” and sure enough, these brave and fearless men had disregarded the traditional law of the sea of “women and children first”, and had left their only lady passenger and her babe behind, alone on the drowning ship. All night they had snored on the beach, unconscious of her peril, nor did they hear the loud bang when the big cannon crashed down a hatchway, right through the ship’s bottom, sinking her below her deck.

Ashamed and horror-stricken, they launched a boat and a number of the crew made their way over the bumping billows to the wreck and then a cheer came back, for the woman and her child still lived, to the wild joy of Pierre Lepine. This hardy daughter of Lower Canada had wrapped her baby in a seaman’s blanket, strapped it to her back and then bound herself securely to the swaying mast, where she hung throughout the rest of that awful night. She almost died from the experience, but through the kindness and attention of the remorseful crew she gradually recovered and lived to raise her child to womanhood at Penetanguishene.

When the shivering men began to take inventory of their baggage and cargo, they found that practically all was lost except the thirteen barrels of whiskey and one horse which had managed to swim to shore, where it galloped madly up and down, whinnying for its missing mates. William Solomon offered a large reward to anyone who would bring the horse to Penetanguishene, but the ice formed before it could be attempted and the poor animal perished. The island where this wreck occurred was Fitzwilliam, the most southerly of the Manitoulin group, but is better known by the name of Horse Island, so named in memory of the stranded horse from this wrecked rum-ship of long ago.

What became of the whiskey? Did it perish with the horse?

No, alas! John Barleycorn does not depart so honorably. In some way it reached Penetanguishene without losing any of its ancient power and formed part of Jim Fraser's stock in founding the first tavern at the new British base.

CHAPTER VII.

FAMOUS NAVAL BATTLE OFF TENBY BAY IN 1814

As the beautiful evening of August 31, 1814, drew to a close, and the moon beams began to play along the grand and lonely shores of Lake Huron, a long military canoe glided to dock at Mackinaw Island, and eighteen seamen of the Royal Navy followed up the winding path towards the blinking lights of the British fortress.

These men had been engaged in the defence of Canada's frontier since the beginning of the war. They were truly brave and dauntless men, tempered like steel by years of roughing it in the wilderness. Though their duties were often hard in the extreme, they never lost courage and were always ready for the next act. The commanding officer was Miller Worsley, a naval lieutenant of the finest type, in appearance tall and commanding, with fine open face and cultured mien, bearing out Sir Ryder Haggard's definition of a gentleman, "A person like a British naval officer." That Lieutenant Worsley was cultured and unassuming, we may glean from his despatches and reports. He had the utmost confidence of his superior officers throughout the war and they speak of him as "one of the most efficient and reliable officers of the naval service, who always did the best thing possible in an emergency."

This little band of seamen had arrived, after a perilous trip, from Notawasaga, on Georgian Bay, where they had fought an American raiding party of seven schooners against heavy odds. They had been forced to burn their only armed schooner, the famous Nancy, and abandon their base, and at last they had arrived at the stronghold of Mackinaw, where they hoped to fight another day.

The American squadron sailed to St. Joseph's Island, confident of their ability to sweep the British flag from the northern lake region. Finding all available British forces concentrated at Mackinaw, they turned their bows in that direction, hoping to strike a swift and certain knockout blow to Britain's hold on Lake Huron. However, they were due for a big surprise, and a stunning defeat, for the resourceful commander, Colonel McDouall, had carefully prepared his defence, and gave the American ships such a hot reception that they withdrew to the vicinity of Drummond Island, some of them in a badly damaged condition. After a careful review of the situation, the American commander ordered five of the squadron to Detroit, leaving two, the Tigress and Scorpion, to harass the British line of communication with Mackinaw, hoping to do by blockade

what they had failed to do by assault. This plan seemed all too certain of accomplishment for McDouall was short of supplies, and unless the consignment secreted in the mouth of the Thessalon river could be forwarded within the next two weeks, he would be face to face with the conquering foe of hunger. By reduced rations he might prolong the agony, but the end was sure, unless the Americans could be driven from his communications.

Though seasoned to famine, fire and sword, this grizzled commander of the British fortress betrayed his fears by his eager questioning of his scouts and navigators and by sending agents in all directions to buy food, if possible, from the Indians who, by the way, were on the point of famine themselves. McDouall realized he was at death grips with the grim enemy, hunger, but he decided he would make a brave fight of it.

Under these circumstances, it was not strange that Colonel McDouall listened intently to Lieutenant Worsley, that night, as he hastily explained a plan for attacking without delay, the two American sea wolves, now lurking in their rear. Just a few hours before he had passed one of these enemy ships among the islands of Lake Huron. The other one they discovered some miles farther away. He had explored the situation as carefully as he could and was convinced that if an immediate attack were made, these ships might be caught off guard and one or both be captured. McDouall was known to be a cautious soldier, who gave long and careful consideration to his plans, but in this case he did not hesitate, but at once promised the naval officer every assistance within his power. Though it might seem a hazardous undertaking, it was the only chance of saving the fortress and of holding the Upper Lakes.

During the afternoon of the next day, September 1st, a little fleet of four boats slipped away from Mackinaw, and headed towards Lake Huron. Two of these boats were equipped with field pieces in their bows, the personnel consisting of the seventeen British seamen and a detachment of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment under Lieutenants Bugler and Armstrong, in all, about fifty men under the supreme command of Lieutenant Worsley. They reached the Detour passage the next evening, without sighting the sought-for ships. After some hours of fruitless searching, murmurs of disappointment passed through the ranks. “Taken to their bloomin’ ’eels for Detroit, that’s it,” was the opinion of one veteran. But Miller Worsley was an experienced tactician who did not jump at conclusions and he knew the enemy might easily be within a short distance hidden from view by an island or the jutting coast line of the mainland.

His greatest fear was lest they themselves be detected and the whole chance lost. Therefore, he lectured his men on caution and extreme vigilance. They must take their time and on no account risk being seen. The next day about noon, an excited scout came paddling to his commander with the whispered words, “The Lawd’s delivered them into our ’ands,” and there, sure enough, in the direction of St. Joseph’s Island, could be seen the naked masts of a ship partly hidden by an island, which is now known as Burnt Island, in the mouth of Tenby Bay. Impatiently the little

expedition waited in the roads of Detour till it began to grow dark, and then at the word of command bent heavily on the oars and sped forward to the attack.

It was a desperate chance. If all went as they hoped and planned, they might capture the schooner before she could be joined by her sister ship, which they knew was several miles farther down. But if they were detected at the right moment and the Americans were prepared, they might be annihilated in the open lake with no chance of escape. But the defence of this part of Canada hung upon that chance, and they were prepared to take it.

With scarcely a word spoken, the oars rose and fell, and the boats sped nearer and nearer their goal until, about ten o'clock, they shot out from the cover of Burnt Island into full view of the Tigress. At the same moment, the moon peeped out from behind a cloud, and seemed to smile down in half pity upon this mad undertaking. Its silvery light was quite unwanted at this particular moment, for it showed the British fighters up plainly on the glassy water. A sharp challenge rang out from the Tigress, which was answered only by the determined pull of the oars, and then the quiet night was thunder riven by the crash of firearms, and for a moment the schooner was enveloped in the smoke and flash of her guns. Several of the brave occupants of the small boats sank limp over the sides, having made the supreme sacrifice "for freedom, home and loved ones dear."

Then the great forests of St. Joseph Island were made to echo and re-echo by a deafening British cheer, and Worsley's men swarmed over the sides of the Tigress and engaged their foes hand to hand. It was soon over and Worsley had won the first round in the fight for control of Lake Huron.

A bronzed sergeant was halted as he came forward, proudly, to hoist the Union Jack. No explanation was given by the silent commander, only that their must be no further cheering and all must remain quiet for the night. The next morning, after searching the horizon with his glass, Lieutenant Worsley, to the astonishment of his men, directed that the thirty-five American prisoners should be taken to Mackinaw in the small boats, under guard. A corporal of the guard might have been heard to mutter as they pulled quietly away, "These blimed naval hofficers 'ave queer notions; w'y don't 'e take 'em to Mackinaw in the Tigress and save all this blowed rowin'?"

Late that afternoon those of the crew, who were skeptical, learned why the captured Tigress should remain just as she was, with the American colors at the mast, when they saw the white sails of the Scorpion loom into view from the direction of Drummond Island. The British soldiers were bidden to lie down, so their red coats could not be seen. Slowly, but surely, the Scorpion drifted up, the crew never suspectng what was in store for them, until she was within thirty yards, and then with one volley, the British slipped over the side of the Tigress, and almost before the surprised Americans knew what had happened, were among them. Lieu-

tenant Turner, of the American Navy, who commanded the Scorpion, rallied his men and made a brave defence of his ship, but it was no use, and in a few minutes the battle was won and the British ensign fluttered from the masthead.

Thus, with the loss of little more than a dozen who were killed, this brave and capable officer of the British fleet, had carried through one of the most daring and important feats of the whole war, for by the capture of these two armed raiders of the lakes, all danger to Mackinaw was removed and the close of the war a few months later, found Great Britain in complete control of the Upper Lakes, an advantage which settled her claim to the great territory of the north and west over which the British flag still waves.

Lieutenant Worsley was highly commended to headquarters for this act, and was raised to the rank of commodore in recognition of his valuable services throughout the war. In his own account of the fight, he characteristically avoids any praise of himself or his men, but lauds the Americans for their plucky defence. This daring exploit has not been recorded in our histories or schoolbooks and we must search the official records to learn of its far-reaching importance. The correct name for Tenby Bay is Worsley Bay, which we will see by official maps, so named in honor of the British naval officer who won this victory there on September 4, 1814.



